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MISREPRESENTATIVE WOMEN

By HARRY GRAHAM

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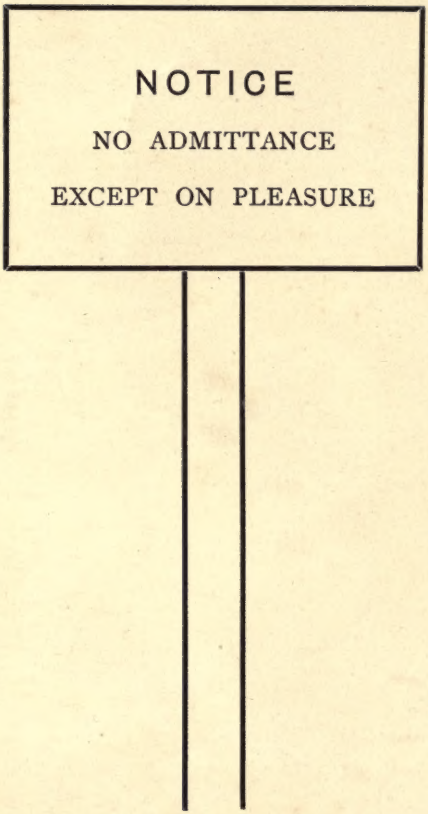
NOTICE
NO ADMITTANCE
EXCEPT ON PLEASURE

Her wardrobe, though extremely small,
Sufficed a somewhat simple need.

(*Page* 2.)

MISREPRESENTATIVE WOMEN

AND OTHER VERSES

By HARRY GRAHAM

AUTHOR OF 'RUTHLESS RHYMES FOR HEARTLESS HOMES' 'BALLADS OF THE BOER WAR,' 'MISREPRESENTATIVE MEN,' 'FISCAL BALLADS,' 'VERSE AND WORSE' ETC.

Illustrated by

DAN SAYRE GROESBECK

LONDON

EDWARD ARNOLD

41 & 43 MADDOX STREET, BOND STREET, W.

1906

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TO

K. M. D.

'Times and places new we know,
Faces fresh and seasons strange,
But the friends of long ago
Do not change.'

PUBLISHER'S PREFACE

GENTLE Reader, who so patiently hast waited
For such viands as our poet can provide,
Which (as critics have occasionally stated)
Must be trying to a delicate inside,—
Once again are opportunities afforded
Of a banquet, or a *déjeuner* at least,
Once again your toleration is rewarded
By a literary feast!

We admit that Rudyard Kipling's work is stronger,
And that Chaucer's may be rather more mature;
Byron's lyrics are indubitably longer,
Robert Browning's just a trifle more obscure;
But 'tis certain that no poems are politer,
Or more fitted for perusal in the home,
Than the verses of the unassuming writer
Of this memorable tome!

Austin Dobson is a daintier performer,
Andrew Lang is far more scholarly and wise,
Mr. Swinburne can, of course, be somewhat warmer,
Alfred Austin more amusing, if he tries;

But there 's no one in the world (and well you know it!)
Who can emulate the bard of whom we speak,
For the literary methods of *our* poet
Are admittedly unique!

Though he shows no signs of penitence at breaking
Ev'ry rule of English grammar and of style,
(Not a rhyme is too atrocious for his making,
Not a metre for his purpose is too vile!)
Though his treatment is essentially destructive,
And his taste a thing that no one can admire,
There is something incontestably seductive
In the music of his lyre!

Gentle Reader, some apologies are needed
For depositing this volume on your desk,
Since the author has undoubtedly exceeded
All the limits of legitimate burlesque,
And we look with very genuine affection
To a public who, for better or for worse,
Will relieve us of this villainous collection
Of abominable verse!

Gentle Reader, who so patiently hast waited

MISREPRESENTATIVE WOMEN

I

EVE

I ALWAYS love to picture Eve,
Whatever captious critics say,
As one who was, I do believe,
The nicest woman of her day.
Attractive to the outward view;
And such a perfect *lady* too!

Unselfish—that one can't dispute,
Recalling her intense delight,
When she acquired some novel fruit,
In giving all her friends a bite.
Her very troubles she would share
With those who happened to be there.

MISREPRESENTATIVE WOMEN

Her wardrobe, though extremely small,
Sufficed a somewhat simple need ;
She was, if anything at all,
A trifle *under*dressed, indeed ;
And never visited a play
In headgear known as 'Matinée.'

Possessing but a single *beau*,
With only one *affaire de cœur*,
She promptly married, as we know,
The man who first proposed to her—
Not for his title or his pelf,
But simply for his own sweet self!

He loved her madly, at first sight,
His callow heart was quite upset,
He thought her nearly, if not quite,
The sweetest soul he ever met ;
She found him charming—for a man ;
And so their young romance began!

(Their wedding was a trifle tame :
A purely family affair :
No guests were asked, no pressmen came
To interview the happy pair ;
No crowds of curious strangers bored them ;
The Eden *Mirror* quite ignored them.)

EVE

They had the failings of their class,
The faults and foibles of the youthful ;
She was inquisitive, alas !
And he was—not exactly truthful !
But never was there man or woman
So truly, so intensely human !

And hand in hand, from day to day,
They lived and laboured, man and wife,
Together hewed their common way
Along the rugged path of life ;
Remaining, though the seasons pass'd,
Friends, lovers, to the very last.

So, side by side, they shared, these two,
The sorrows and the joys of living ;
The Man devoted, tender, true,
The Woman patient and forgiving ;
Their common toil, their common weather,
But drew them closelier still together.

And if they ever chanced to grieve,
Enduring loss, or suff'ring pain,
You may be certain it was Eve
Brought comfort to their hearts again ;
If they were happy, well I know,
It was the Woman made them so.

. . . . . .

So, though the anthropologist
May mention, in his tactless way,
That Adam's weaknesses exist
Among our modern Men to-day,
In Women we may still perceive
The virtues of their Mother Eve!

II

MISS MARIE CORELLI

Her praise is sung by old and young,
From Happy Hampstead to Hoboken,
Where'er our English mother-tongue
Is (ungrammatically) spoken,
In that supremely simple set
Which loves the Penny Novelette.

All Anglo-Saxon peoples kneel
Before this literary idol,
While wretched rival authors feel
Depressed and almost suicidal;
They cannot reach within a mile
Of her sublime suburban style.

Her modest, unobtrusive ways,
In sunny Stratford's guide-books graven,
Her brilliance, lighting with its rays
The birthplace of the Swan of Avon,
Must cause the Bard as deep a pain
As his resemblance to Hall Caine.

MISREPRESENTATIVE WOMEN

Mere ordinary mortals ask,
With no desire for picking quarrels,
Who gave her the congenial task
Of judging other people's morals?
Who bade her flay her fellow-men
With such a frankly feline pen?

And one may seek, and seek in vain,
The social set she loves to mention,
Those offspring of her fertile brain,
Those creatures of her fond invention.
(She is, or so it would appear,
Unlucky in her friends, poor dear!)

For though, like her, they feel the sway
Of claptrap sentimental glamour,
And frequently, like her, give way
To lapses from our English grammar,
The victims of her diatribes
Are not the least as she describes.

To restaurants they seldom go
Just for the sake of over-eating;
While ladies don't play Bridge, you know,
Entirely for the sake of cheating;
And husbands can be quite nice men;
And wives *are* faithful, now and then!

Were she to mingle with her ink
A little milk of human kindness.

MISS MARIE CORELLI

Were she to mingle with her ink
A little milk of human kindness,
She would not join, I dare to think,
To chronic social colour-blindness
An outlook prejudiced and narrow
As that of some provincial sparrow.

But though, perhaps, it might affect
Her literary circulation,
If she were tempted to neglect
Her talent for vituperation,—
Since work of this peculiar kind
Delights the groundling's curious mind,—

Yet even bumpkins, by and by
(Such is the spread of education),
May view with cold, phlegmatic eye
The fruits of her imagination,
And learn to temper their devotion
With slight, if adequate, emotion.

Meanwhile, of course, from day to day,
Her popularity increases,
While, in an artless sort of way,
She tears society to pieces.
(Her sense of humour, so they tell us,
Makes even Alfred Austin jealous!)

MISREPRESENTATIVE WOMEN

. . . . . .

Dear Miss Corelli, should your eyes
    Peruse this page ('tis my ambition),
Be sure that I apologise,
    In any suitable position,
For having weakly imitated
The style that you yourself created.

I cannot fancy to attain
    To heights of personal invective
Which you, with subtler pen and brain,
    Have learnt to render so effective.
I follow dimly in your trail;
Forgive me, therefore, if I fail!

III

LADY GODIVA

In the old town of Coventry, so people say,
Dwelt a Peer who was utterly lacking in pity;
Universally loathed for the rigorous way
That he burdened the rates of the city.
By his merciless methods of petty taxation,
The poor were reduced to the verge of starvation.

But the Earl had a wife, whom the people adored,
For her kindness of heart even more than her beauty;
And her pitiless lord she besought and implored
To remit this extortionate 'duty.'
But he answered, 'My dear, pray reflect at your leisure,
That what *you* deem a duty, to me is a pleasure!'

At the heart of her spouse she continued to storm,
And she closed her entreaties, one day, by exclaiming:
'If you take off the tax, I will gladly perform
Any task that you like to be naming.'
'Well, if that be the case,' said the nobleman, 'I've a
Good mind just to test you, my Lady Godiva!

'To your wishes, my dear, I will straight acquiesce,
On the single condition—I give you fair warning—
That you ride through the city, at noon, in the dress
That you wear in your bath of a morning!'
'Very well!' she replied; 'be it so! though you drive a
Hard bargain, my lord,' said the Lady Godiva.

So she slipped off her gown, and her shoulders lay bare,
Gleaming white like the moon on Aonian fountains;
When about them she loosened her curtains of hair,
'Twas like Night coming over the mountains!
And she blushed, 'neath the veil of her wonderful tresses,
As blushes the Morn 'neath the Sun's first caresses!

Then she hied to the stable and saddled her steed,
Who erected his ears, till he looked like a rabbit,—
He was somewhat surprised, as he might be, indeed,
At the lady's unusual 'habit,'—
But allowed her to mount in the masculine way,
For he couldn't say 'No,' and he wouldn't say 'Neigh'!

So she rode through the town, in the heat of the sun,
(To the lady this journey, no doubt, seemed eternal,)
And the people all drew down their blinds—except one,
On the staff of some halfpenny journal.
(Such misconduct produced in the eyes of this vile one
A cataract nearly as large as the Nile one!)

At the heart of her spouse she continued to storm.

Then Godiva returned, and the Earl had to yield
(And the paralysed pressman dictated his cable);
The tax was remitted, the bells were re-pealed,
And the horse was returned to the stable;
While banners were waved from each possible quarter,
Except from the flat of the stricken reporter!

Now the moral is this—if I 've fathomed the tale
(Though it needs a more delicate pen to explain it)—
You can get whatsoever you want, without fail,
If you 'll sacrifice all to obtain it.
And tho' people may cut unconventional capers,
Never write an account for the halfpenny papers!

IV

MRS. EDDY

HAVE you a pain all down your back?
A feeling of intense prostration?
Are you anæmic, for the lack
Of proper circulation?
With bloodshot eye and hand unsteady?—
Pray send at once for Mrs. Eddy.

The Saint and Prophetess is she
Of what is known as Christian Science;
And you can lean on Mrs. E.
With absolute reliance;
For she will shortly make it plain
That there is no such thing as pain.

The varied ailments on your list
Which cause you such extreme vexation,
Are nothing more, she will insist,
Than mere imagination.
'Tis so with illness or disease:
Nothing exists . . . except her fees!

MRS. EDDY

A friend of mine had not been taught
This doctrine, I regret to say ;
He fell downstairs, or so he *thought*,
And broke his neck, one day.
Had Mrs. Eddy come along,
She could have shown him he was wrong.

She could have told him (or his wraith)
That stairs and necks have no existence,
That persons with sufficient faith
Can fall from any distance.
And that he wasn't in the least
What local papers called 'deceased.'

Of ills to which the flesh is heir
She is decidedly disdainful ;
But once, or so her foes declare,
Her teeth became so painful,
That though she knew they couldn't be,
She had them taken out, to see.

Afflictions of the lame or halt,
Which other people view with terror,
To her denote some moral fault,
Some form of mental error.
While doctors probe and amputate,
She simply heals you while you wait.

MISREPRESENTATIVE WOMEN

My brother, whom you may have seen,
Possessed a limp, a very slight one ;
His leg, the left, had always been
Much shorter than the right one.
But Mrs. Eddy came his way,
And—well, just look at him to-day !

At healing she had grown so deft
That when she finished with my brother,
His crippled leg, I mean the left,
Was *longer* than the other !
And now he 's praying, day and night,
For faith to lengthen out the right !

So let it be your chief concern
To set diseases at defiance,
Contriving, as the truths you learn
Of so-called ' Christian ' Science,
To live from illnesses exempt,
—Or else to die in the attempt !

V

MRS. GRUNDY

When Lovely Woman stoops to smoke
(A vice in which she often glories),
Or sees the somewhat doubtful joke
In after-dinner stories,
Who is it to her bedroom rushes
To hide the fervour of her blushes?

When Susan's skirt 's a trifle short,
Or Mary's manner rather skittish,
Who is it, with a fretful snort
(So typically British),
Emits prolonged and startled cries,
Suggestive of a pained surprise?

Who is it, tell me, in effect,
Who loves to centre her attentions
On all who wilfully neglect
Society's conventions,
And seems eternally imbued
With saponaceous rectitude?

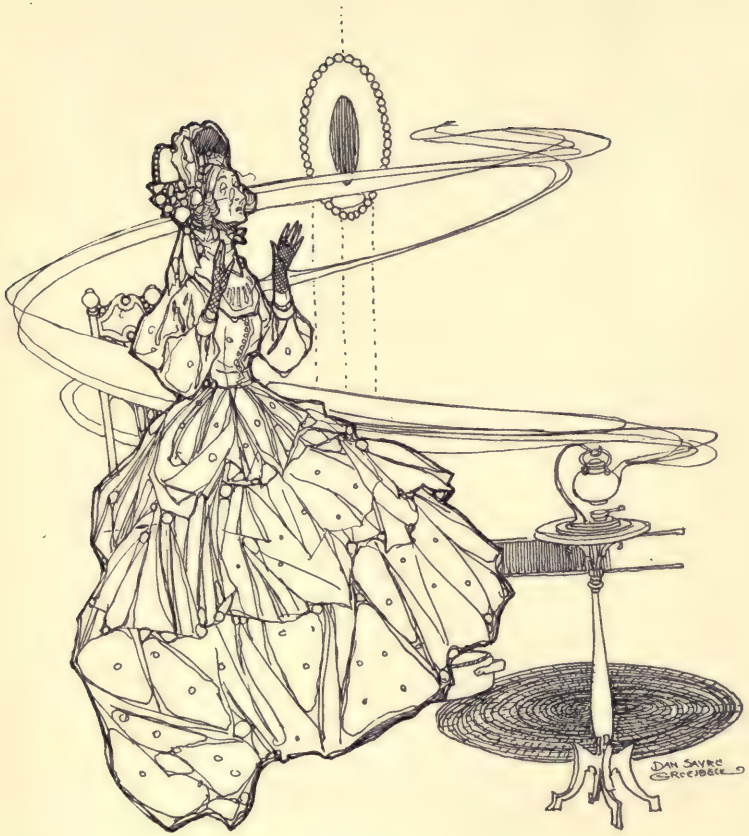
MISREPRESENTATIVE WOMEN

'Tis Mrs. Grundy, deaf and blind
To anything the least romantic,
Combining with a narrow mind
A point of view pedantic,
Since nothing in the world can stop her
From thinking anything improper.

The picture or the marble bust,
At any public exhibition,
Evokes her unconcealed disgust
And rouses her suspicion,
If human forms are shown to us
In puris naturalibus.

The bare, in any sense or shape,
She looks upon as wrong or faulty;
Piano-legs she likes to drape
If they are too *décoll'té*;
For long with horror she has viewed
The naked Truth, for being nude.

On modern manners that efface
The formal modes of introduction,
She is at once prepared to place
The very worst construction,
And frowns, suspicious and sardonic,
On friendships that are termed Platonic.



For long with horror she has viewed
The naked Truth, for being nude.

MRS. GRUNDY

The English restaurants must close
At twelve o'clock at night, each Sunday,
To suit (or so we may suppose)
The taste of Mrs. Grundy;
On week-days, thirty minutes later,
Ejected guests revile the waiter.

A sense of humour she would vote
The sign of mental dissipations;
She scorns whatever might promote
The gaiety of nations;
Of lawful fun she seems no fonder
Than of the noxious *dooblontonder!*

And if you wish to make her blench
And snap her teeth together tightly,
Say something in Parisian French,
And close one optic slightly.
'*Rien ne va plus! Enfin, alors!*'
She leaves the room and slams the door!

O Mrs. Grundy, do, I beg,
To false conclusions cease from rushing,
And learn to name the human leg
Without profusely blushing!
No longer be (don't think me rude)
That unalluring thing, the prude!

MISREPRESENTATIVE WOMEN

No more patrol the world, I pray,
In search of trifling social errors ;
Let 'What will Mrs. Grundy say?'
No longer have its terrors ;
Leave diatribes and objurgations
To Billingtons and Carrie Nations !

VI

DAME RUMOUR

I SHOULD like to remark that Dame Rumour
Is the most unalluring of jades;
She has little or no sense of humour,
And her fables are worse than George Ade's
—Or rather, I mean (if the reader prefers),
That the fables of Ade are much *better* than hers!

Her appearance imbues one with loathing,
From her jaundiced, malevolent eyes
To the tinsel she cares to call clothing,
Which is merely a patchwork of lies;
For her garments are such that a child could see through,
And her blouse (need I add?) is the famed Peek-a-boo!

She is wholly devoid of discretion;
She is utterly wanting in tact;
She 's a gossip by trade and profession,
And she much prefers fiction to fact.
She is seldom veracious, and always unkind,
And she flits to and fro with the speed of the wind.

MISREPRESENTATIVE WOMEN

She resembles the men who ('tis fabled)
Fall into the Packingtown vats,
Who are boiled there, and bottled, and labelled
For the tables of poor democrats,—
Pickled souls who are canned for the public to buy,
And (like her) have a finger in every pie!

With a step that is silent and stealthy,
Or an ear-splitting clamour and noise,
She disturbs the repose of the wealthy,
Or the peace which the pauper enjoys;
And, however securely the doors may be shut,
She can always gain access to palace or hut.

Where the spinsters at tea are collected,
Her arrival is hailed with delight;
She is welcomed, adored and respected
In each newspaper office at night;
For her presence imprints an original seal
On an otherwise commonplace journal or meal!

She has nothing in common with Virtue,
And with Truth she was never allied;
If she hasn't yet managed to hurt you,
—It can't be from not having tried!
For the poison of adders is under her tongue,
And you're lucky indeed if you've never been stung.

Where the spinsters at tea are collected,
Her arrival is hailed with delight.

DAME RUMOUR

Are you statesman, or author, or artist,
With a perfectly blameless career?
Are your talents and wits of the smartest,
And your conscience abnormally clear?
'He's a saint!' says Dame Rumour, and smiles like
the Sphinx.
'He's a hero!' (she adds) 'What a pity he drinks!

Gentle Reader, keep clear of her clutches!
O beware of her voice, I entreat!
Be you journalist, dowager-duchess,
Or just merely the Man in the Street.
And I beg of you not to encourage a jade
Who when once she is started can never be stayed!

VII

MRS. CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

THE bride grows pale beneath her veil,
The matron, for the nonce, is dumb,
Who listens to the tragic tale
Of Mrs. Christopher Columb;
Who lived and died (so says report)
A widow of the herbal sort.

Her husband upon canvas wings
Would brave the ocean, tempest-tost,
He had a *culte* for finding things
Which nobody had ever lost,
And Mrs. C. grew almost frantic
When he discovered the Atlantic.

But nothing she could do or say
Would keep her Christopher at home.
Without delay he sailed away,
Across what poets call 'the foam,'
While neighbours murmured 'What a shame!'
(And wished their husbands did the same.)

MRS. CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

He ventured on the highest C's
    That reared their heads above the bar,
Knowing the compass and the quays
    Like any operatic star;
And funny friends who watched him do so
Would call him 'Robinson Caruso.'

But Mrs. C. remained indoors,
    And poked the fire and wound the clocks,
Amused the children, scrubbed the floors,
    Or darned her absent husband's socks.
(For she was far too sweet and wise
To darn the great explorer's eyes.)

And when she chanced to look around
    At all the couples she had known,
She realised how few had found
    A home as peaceful as her own,
And saw how pleasant it may be
To wed a chronic absentee.

Her husband's absence she enjoyed,
    Nor ever asked him where he went,
Thinking him harmlessly employed
    Discovering some Continent.
Had he been always in, no doubt,
Some day she would have found him out.

And so he daily left her side
To travel o'er the ocean far,
And she who, like the bard, had tried
To 'hitch her wagon to a star,'
Though she was harnessed to a comet,
Got lots of satisfaction from it.

For when she got him home again,
And so could wear the jewels rare
Which Isabella, Queen of Spain,
Entrusted to her husband's care,
Her momentary wealth was 'far
Beyond the dreams of caviar!'

. . . . . .

A melancholy thing it is
How few have known or understood
The manifold advantages
Of such herbaceous widowhood!
What is it ruins married lives
But husbands? (Not to mention wives?)

O wedded couples of to-day,
Pray take these principles to heart,
And copy the Columbian way
Of living happily apart,
And so, to *you*, at any rate,
Shall marriage be a 'blessed state.'

And so he daily left her side
To travel o'er the ocean far.

OPEN LETTERS

I

A SELF-MADE FATHER TO HIS READY-MADE SON

My Offspring :—Ere you raise the glass
To irrigate your ardent throttle ;
Ere once again you gladly pass
The bottle ;
Take heed that your prevailing passion
Be not completely out of fashion.

Display a little common-sense,
And study London's leading 'Dailies' ;
Sifting their wealth of evidence
(Like Paley's) ;
And note, without a shade of doubt,
That heavy drinking has gone out.

No longer does the Prodigal
Expend his nights in drunken frolic;
Or pass his days in revels al-
Coholic;
For, nowadays, a glass *de trop*
Is not considered *comme il faut.*

No longer do the youthful fall,
Like leaf or partridge in October;
For they, if anything at all,
Are sober—
(I mean the boys, don't be absurd!
And not the foliage or the bird.)

No more do callow youths prefer
'The Empire's' meretricious glamour
To games of chess with some subur-
Ban Crammer;
Congesting, at the close of day,
The pavements, Piccadilly-way.

No longer arm-in-arm they roam,
Despite constabulary warning,
Declaring that they won't go home
Till morning!
With bursts of bacchanalian song,
And jokes as broad as they are long.

A SELF-MADE FATHER TO HIS SON

No more they wander to and fro,
Exchanging incoherent greetings—
The kind in vogue at Caledo-
Nian Meetings—
(Behaviour that we all condemn,
Especially at 3 A.M.).

Yes; fashions change—and well they may!
No longer, at the dinner-table,
Do persons drink as much as they
Are able;
And seek the hospitable floor,
When they have drunk a trifle more.

My nasal hue, incarnadine,
Shall not, perhaps, be wholly wasted,
If sons of mine but leave their wine
Untasted;
And vanquish, with deserving merit,
The varied vices they inherit.

Yes, Offspring, I rejoice to think
That, shunning my example truly,
You never may be led to drink
Unduly.
It is indeed a blessed thought!
Now, will you kindly pass the port?

II

TO LORD RONALD SUTHERLAND GOWER

(With apologies to Tennyson's 'Lady Clara Vere de Vere')

['I remember, on first going to Eton, being amazed at the Billingsgate which one heard on all sides. . . . Looking back to my Eton days is a half painful, half amusing subject, and when I recall the talk at Eton of present Cabinet Ministers, Bishops, and Colonial Governors, I wonder if they remember the way in which they behaved themselves when at this precious school. . . .'—Extract from Lord Ronald Gower's letter to the *Daily Mail*.]

DEAR Lord Ronald Gower de Gower,
You win a very cheap renown
When, in the columns of the Press,
You run your erstwhile college down.
A style so chaste, such perfect taste,
At Eton never were acquired;
Esprit de corps like yours, my lord,
Leaves very much to be desired.

TO LORD RONALD SUTHERLAND GOWER

Dear Lord Ronald Gower de Gower,
You bear too dignified a name
To search the gutter-ways for mud
To smirch the school from which you came.
It may be wise to criticise,
But never, surely, to traduce;
A single word of kind advice
Is worth whole columns of abuse!

Dear Lord Ronald Gower de Gower,
The Eton that you thus disown
Has bred a hundred thousand men
Who would not stoop to such a tone.
The school you try to vilify
Has other sons, more staunch and true.
The lions in Trafalgar Square
Are warm of heart compared to you!

Dear Lord Ronald Gower de Gower,
Upon the block where once you bled,
A thousand urchins, since your day,
Their blue reluctant gore have shed!
With trembling air they mount the stair,
The stern head master bids them kneel,
And there is that within his hand
Which culprits do not care to feel!

OPEN LETTERS

Dear Lord Ronald Gower de Gower,
What spectre haunts the old school-yard,
That taints your literary style,
And makes your kindly heart so hard?
You deprecate the Billingsgate
Of Bishops, in those ages back;
Who knows what they have got to say
Of such an unprovoked attack!

Trust me, Ronald Gower de Gower,
In Upper School, where still he sits,
The new head master (with his birch)
Smiles at the gall your pen emits.
He likes to think that, while your ink
Expends its poison on the waste,
Kind thoughts are more than epithets,
And loyalty than doubtful taste.

I know, Lord Ronald Gower de Gower,
The Trav'llers' Club, where you reside;
The reading-room is fair and large,
The chairs are low, the sofas wide;
With papers there, and books to spare,
One could be happy, more or less;
And need not waste the precious hours
Inditing letters to the Press.

TO LORD RONALD SUTHERLAND GOWER

Dear Lord Ronald Gower de Gower,
If time hangs heavy on your hands,
Are there no grievances abroad,
No wrongs to right in alien lands?
O teach the Chinaman to mine,
The Russian *moujik* to be free!
Pray Heaven for a kindlier heart,
And let our Eton College be!

III

SMITH MINOR TO THE HEAD MASTER OF ETON

['We are not so daring as to suggest anything so august as a Reform; but no one would dislike "a little reasonable change," as the Colonel said in the smoking-room of the Club.'—*Eton Chronicle.*]

Of course, I know, it's beastly cheek
For a Lower boy to jaw a Beak—
Maybe you'll think I shouldn't;
But Johnson *minimus*, at My Dame's,
A chap who's awfully good at games,
Betted a bob I wouldn't;—
Told me I funked, and didn't dare;
—Said you'd probably lose your hair.

Johnson's a frightfully decent chap,
Tho' he rags me rather for being a sap,
Which, of course, I'm not; no fear!
But I stand his beastly third-form chaff,
Cos we messed together all last half,
And he'll play for My Dame's this year.
(He makes the most ripping buttered toast,
And he isn't half rotten as 'back-up-post.')

SMITH MINOR TO HEAD MASTER OF ETON

Johnson betted that when you came
Nothing at Eton 'd stay the same ;
(Rummy ideas he 's got !)
Johnson says you 're the sort of Head
Who 'd see that fellows were properly fed,
And all that kind of rot ;
Wrapping red flannel round our chests,
And giving us Jaeger undervests !

Johnson swears you 'll put a stop
To the sausage tea and the breakfast chop,
Cos you don't approve of meat.
He says you 'll want us to live on roots,
In fibre suits and porous boots,
With nothing but 'greens' to eat !
(My Dame's cold beef isn't always nice,
But I bar a diet of nuts and rice !)

Johnson says you 'll do away
With the Eton Beagles, some fine day,
And with 'Pop' and 'Tap' as well ;
And force each 'Lower' to walk 'down town'
With his brolly furled and his bags turned down,
Like a regular Sixth-Form swell ;
Which, as nobody knows, sir, better than you,
Is a thing no fellow could ever do.

But you 're pretty well sure to play the game,
For I like your looks, and I like your name,
Which is one of our Eton's own ;
Like Lubbock, and Grenfell, and Warre, I s'pose,
It 's a name that ev'ry Etonian knows,
And that Eton has always known ;
To Eton such famous names belong,
And the fellows who bear them can't go wrong.

Your people were all a sporting set,
And you are a sportsman too, I 'll bet.
Alfred, of course, we know ;
At Lord's he played for the old light-blue,
And was one of the Commons Eleven, too,
—My Governor told me so ;
And he *must* be a bally well A 1 bat
If they gave him his Cabinet just for that !

If you really want to start reforms,
I 'm sure I could think of simply swarms
(I mean it too,—bar rot !) ;
Johnson and me hold strongish views
About ' Saying lessons ' and ' Sunday Q's,'
Which are always a beastly swot ;
And we 'd like you to introduce a rule
Against ' Yellow tickets ' and ' Early school.'

SMITH MINOR TO HEAD MASTER OF ETON

But we 're Tories at Eton, ev'ry one,
And we don't want any new ways begun,
Or the old ways overthrown.
Tho' we mayn't be up to date, they say,
We 're up to a thing or two still, I lay ;
But we like to be left alone.
And as long as the Head remembers that,
So long may he jolly well *Floreat!*

IV

AN AUTHOR TO HIS HOSTESS

['Very few English men of letters enjoy a desirable social position. To be sure, they are frequently invited to functions, where they are treated with insistent affability by persons belonging to the higher classes; but the sort of position to be obtained in this way is insecure, and unpleasant to any save those of adamantine cheek.'—*The Reader Magazine*, New York.]

DEAR LADY,—When you bade me come
To grace your crowded 'Kettledrum,'
And mingle in the best society;
When Melba sang, and Gottlieb played,
And footmen handed lemonade
(Tempering music with sobriety),
I never had the least suspicion
Of my precarious position.

But now, with opened eyes, I leap
To this conclusion, shrewd and deep
(What cerebral agility!):
Your compliments were insincere,
Your hospitality was mere
'Insistent affability!'
And I a foolish man of letters,
Who thought to mingle with his betters!

AN AUTHOR TO HIS HOSTESS

Ah me! How pride precedes a fall!
That one who haunted 'rout' or ball,
    When invitations were acquirable,
Should see himself as others see,
Becoming suddenly, like me,
    A social 'undesirable';
Invading the selectest clique
With truly adamantine cheek.

How proud an air I used to wear
When titled persons turned to stare!
    I blushed like a geranium
When lovely ladies softly said:
'Oh, Duchess, did you see his head?'
    'What a capacious cranium!'
'Yes; isn't that the man who writes?'
'I wonder why they look such frights!'

I used to bridle coyly when
Some schoolmate of the Upper Ten
    (They were not over numerous!)
Would slap my back, and shout 'By Jove!
Ain't you a literary cove?'
    (As tho' 'twere something humorous!)
'Those books of yours are grand, you bet!
What? No, I haven't read them yet.'

But now I realise my fate;
A stranger at the social gate
(Though treated with civility);
The choicest circles I frequent
Must be the ones my brains invent,
With fictional futility;
The only Royalties I know
Are those my publisher can show!

The 'drum,' the party, and the tea,
Are surely not for men like me
(O Vanity of Vanities!);
Such entertainments are taboo,
They might debase my talents to
Additional inanities.
The Poet has no business there:
Que ferait-il dans cette galère?

Ah, lonely is the Author's lot!
Assuming, if he hath it not,
A suitable humility.
For when his daily work is done,
He must inevitably shun
The homes of the Nobility,
As, with dejected steps, he passes
To supper with the middle classes!

'I wonder why they look such frights!'

V

THE HON. STEPHEN COLERIDGE TO AN ANDOVER J.P.

RELENTLESS BUMBLE :—When you sit
As Chairman of the Petty Sessions,
The evildoers who commit
Their trivial indiscretions
Do now and then, perchance, espy
A bland forgiveness in your eye.

But Chauffeurs never see that glance ;
To them your kindly heart you harden ;
And all in vain do they advance
A humble plea for pardon.
No Spartan punishments exist
Too drastic for the motorist.

However slow he likes to go,
However great the care he uses,
No blameless licence he can show
His grave offence excuses.
To own a motor is the sin
For which your minions run him in !

Two miles an hour, by your police
Is reckoned 'to the common danger,'
Entrapping, out of sheer caprice,
The unsuspecting stranger;
For 'tis the Hampshire 'hedgehog's' forte
To lie in wait, if not in court!

Such buccaneering methods fill
My soul with thoughts of retribution;
Your Sessions seem more Petty still,
With ev'ry prosecution;
Within their narrow jurisdiction
The truth is stranger far than fiction.

With prejudice that sounds absurd,
And shows no symptom of abatement,
You much prefer policemen's word
To sworn civilians' statement;
And seem exceptionally loth
To trust a gentleman on oath.

Obtuse to pleas of innocence,
You base each penal imposition
On bare official evidence,
Which merits some suspicion.
Defence is useless; *quantum suff.*,
To drive a car is guilt enough!

HON. S. COLERIDGE TO AN ANDOVER J.P.

Where you, as Grand Inquisitor,
Apportion fines without misgiving,
The motorist pays dearly for
The privilege of living;
For harmless touring-car or rover
Your Court is fitly named ''And-over!'

And what all those who plan a tour
Through your domains devoutly trust is,
That you may learn to temper your
Severity with justice,
And recognise, in course of time,
That motoring is *not* a crime!

POETIC PARAPHRASES

I

'LOCHINVAR'

(*With apologies to Scott and Swinburne*)

WHEN the shadow-shapes shone like a shaddock,
Where the sunset had kissed them to flame,
On his palfrey, the pick of the paddock,
With his sword in its scabbard, he came!
In the glamour of amorous passion,
He would blaze like a seasoned cigar:
And he fought in a similar fashion,
Did young Lochinvar!

By the fences and fens unaffrighted,
And unstopt by the stream in its spate,
In a lather, at last, he alighted,
And he knocked at the Netherby's gate.
'Twas too late! (as he doubtless had dreaded,)
He perceived his particular 'star'
To a blackguard about to be wedded,
Did young Lochinvar!

But he passed through the portal, so proudly,
To the room where the gifts were displayed,
That old Netherby called to him, loudly
(For the bridegroom, poor fool, was afraid):
'Is it blood you are bent upon shedding?
With a murder this marriage to mar?
Or to waltz do you wish at the wedding,
My young Lochinvar?'

He replied: 'Though 'twere useless to smother
My love for the maid at your side;
Though my Helen be bound to another,
I shall trust to the turn of the tied.
As I drink to her squint and her freckles,
I 'll remark how few ladies there are
Who would shrink from a share of the shekels
Of young Lochinvar.'

Then he pledged her in port so politely
(Though her mother lamented his taste),
And she smiled at him ever so slightly,
As he settled his arm round her waist.
When he drew her direct to the dancers,
The Bohemian band struck a bar,
And she found herself leading the lancers
With young Lochinvar!

Oh, the beauty and grace are so vivid
Of this perfectly parallel pair,
That the parents grow purple and livid,
And the bridegroom is tearing his hair;
While the bridesmaids talk ten to the dozen,
Saying, 'Goodness, what gabies we are,
Not to marry our exquisite cousin
To young Lochinvar!'

Then the girl by her partner is beckoned
To the door, where a charger they find;
To the saddle he springs in a second,
And he lifts her up lightly behind;
'She is mine!' he announces, adjourning
To the distant horizon afar,
'Till the cattle to roost are returning!'
Says young Lochinvar.

O the tumult! The tumbling of tables!
O the stress of the scene that succeeds!
O the stir on the stairs, in the stables!
O the stamping and saddling of steeds!
But the bride has eluded them, surely;
In the room of some kind Registrar,
She is now being wedded securely
To young Lochinvar!

'She is mine!' he announces, adjourning
To the distant horizon afar.

II

'I REMEMBER, I REMEMBER'

(*With apologies to Thomas Hood*)

I STILL recall the villa small
Where dawned my childhood most obscure ;
One solar ray would pierce each day,
Th' exiguous aperture.
On grateful feet, I rose to greet
Apollo's accurate arrival ;
But now, forlorn, I merely mourn
My own survival !

I note where grew the flow'rs of hue
Milkwhite or red as looked-on wine ;
The purple phlox, the hollyhocks,
The rose incarnadine ;
The lilac bush, where lodged the thrush,
And where my brother sat so lightly ;
(Where, I 'm afraid, he overlaid
The nestlings slightly).

POETIC PARAPHRASES

I call to mind how, in the wind,
My see-saw swung me to and fro ;
The swifts flew by with jealous eye,
No swifter could they go.
The parish well would oft dispel
The fever of some childish colic.
(Ah now, methinks, my usual drinks
Are alcoholic !)

I recollect the pines, erect
And dark as distant deodars ;
Each lofty tree, it seemed to me,
Extended to the stars.
But now, although (with age) I grow
Daily, if possible, more clever,
The Heav'n above and all I love
Are farther off than ever !
L'Amour, que je voudrais, au moins
Et les étoiles, sont trop loin !

III

'THE ARROW AND THE SONG'

(*With apologies to Longfellow and Edgar Allan Poe*)

WITH my arquebus plebeian
I assailed the empyréan,
And discharged a nimble arrow, full and fair.
Did I miss? I hear you murmur;
It impinged on *terra firmur*,
Yet I failed to find my missile anywhere.
(It necessitates precision,
And rapidity of vision,
To pursue a bolt projected through the air.)

I composed a simple ditty
(It was humorous and witty,
With a touching *obbligato* for bassoon),
And delighted fellow cronies,
At some conversaziones
Which were given by a maiden aunt in June.
But my memory is rotten,
And the song is quite forgotten,
And I can't recall the lyrics or the tune.

Long, long afterwards, (*Cui bono?*)
From the record of a phono-
Graph I heard my vocal harmonies unpenn'd.
And the arrow? Yes, I found it,
With some sticking-plaster round it,
Deep imbedded in the cranium of a friend.
So the song I can recapture,
And retrieve the bolt with rapture,
But the friendship is, I fear me, at an end!

OTHER VERSES

I

THE CRY OF THE CHILDREN

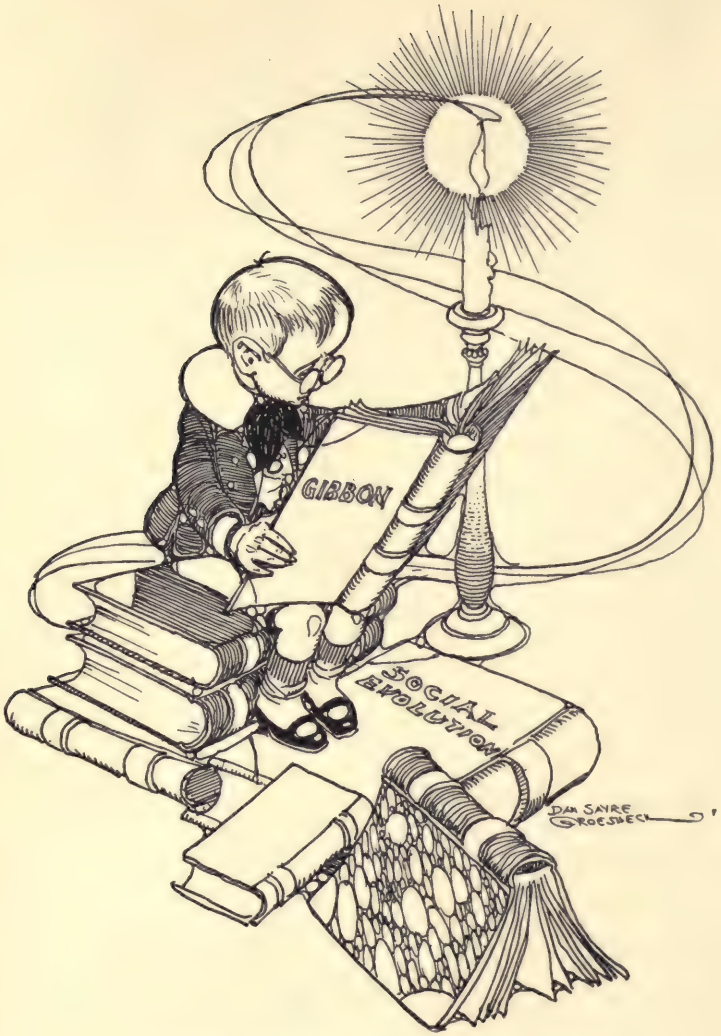
[At a meeting of a provincial Board of Guardians, where the question of infant education was discussed, the opinion was expressed that it would be much more useful if, instead of filling children's minds with such nonsense as fairy tales, stories were read to them about Julius Cæsar.]

O MY brothers, do you hear the children weeping?
Do you note the teardrops tumbling from their eyes?
To the Board-school they reluctantly are creeping,
Discontented with the teaching it supplies.
At the quality of modern education
Little urchins may with justice look askance,
Since it panders to a child's imagination,
And encourages romance.

Do you see that toddling baby with a bib on,
How his eyes with silent misery are dim?
He is yearning for the chance of reading Gibbon;
But his teachers give him nothing else but Grimm!
What a handicap to infantile ambition!
'Tis enough to make the brightest bantling fume,
To be gammoned with an Andrew Lang edition,
When he longs for Hume, sweet Hume!

See that tiny one, what boredom he expresses!
What intolerance his frequent yawns evince
Of the fairy-tales where beautiful princesses
Are delivered from a dragon by a prince!
How he curses the pedantic institution
Where he can't obtain such volumes as 'Le Cid,'
Or that masterpiece on 'Social Evolution'
By another kind of Kidd!

Do you hear the children weeping, O my brothers?
They are crying for Max Müller and Carlyle.
Though Hans Andersen may satisfy their mothers,
They are weary of so immature a style.
And their time is far too brief to be expended
On such nonsense as their 'rude forefathers' read;
For they know the days of sentiment are ended,
And that Chivalry is dead!



He is yearning for the chance of reading Gibbon.

THE CRY OF THE CHILDREN

O remember that the pillars of the nation
Are the children that we discipline to-day ;
That to give them a becoming education
You must rear them in a reasonable way !
Let us guard them from the glamour of the mystics,
Who would throw a ray of sunshine on their lives !
Let us feed each helpless atom on statistics,
And pray Heaven he survives !

Let us cast away the out-of-date traditions,
Which our poets and romanticists have sung !
Let us sacrifice the senseless superstitions
That illuminate the fancies of the young !
If we limit our instruction to the 'reals,'
We may prove to ev'ry baby, from the start,
The futility of cherishing ideals
In his golden little heart !

II

THE DECLINE OF GENTILITY AMONG THE YOUNG

(*Suggested by Mr. Max Beerbohm*)

O YOUTH uncouth, who slouchest by,
On Piccadilly's crowded street,
An eyeglass in thy languid eye,
Brown boots upon thy feet,
A loose umbrella in thy grip,
A toothpick pendent from thy lip,

Much I deplore thy clumsy gait,
Thy drab sartorial display,
So wholly inappropriate
To this august highway;
How can a man in such attire
Expect to set the Thames on fire?

Thou art in dress no epicure,
By weight of fashions overladen;
Thy tawdry togs do not allure
The heart of every maiden;
They sound no echoing colour-note
To her tempestuous petticoat.

Small wonder she receives a shock
Each time she views thy billycock!

DECLINE OF GENTILITY AMONG YOUNG

Her stylish skirt, her dainty blouse,
Are crêpe-de-chine, or bombazine ;[1]
Compare the texture of thy trous:
With *their* chromatic sheen ;
To what abysm of taste we reach
By the Observance of thy Breech !

Think what she pays her *modiste* for
Those hats of questionable shapes,
Surmounted by a seagull or
Some imitation grapes !
Small wonder she receives a shock
Each time she views thy billycock !

Observe how like an autumn leaf
The colours of the male canary,
The garb of each New Zealand chief
Who woos his Little Maori ;
The savage mind has thus designed
A dress to please its womankind.

And tho' I would not have thee go
As far as primal man or beast,
To lovely woman thou shouldst show
Some deference at least,
And give a thought of what to wear
Upon the public thoroughfare.

[1] Impossible.—*Publisher's Reader.* These ones were.—*H. G.*

And shouldst thou wish to walk aright,
Let Mr. B—rb-hm be thy mould ;
Sedate yet courtly, and polite
As any beau of old ;
Yea, plant thy footsteps in the tracks
Of our inimitable Max !

Enclose thy larynx in a stock
(As though afflicted with the fever) ;
From the primeval Mr. Lock
Procure a bristling beaver ;
And practise, not I hope in vain,
The 'conduct of a clouded cane.'

If thou consentest thus to act
In scorn of popular convention,
Thy bearing shall indeed attract
Much feminine attention,
As day by day, in bright array,
Thy figure fills the King's Highway.

III

ABBREVIATION'S ARTFUL AID

THE Bard, at times,
Is stumped for rhymes,
  Without the least excuse.
He can defy
Such moments by
  Abbreviation's use.
And gain the grat:
  Of friend or neighb:
Without an at:
  Of extra lab:

Unc: Sam (and fam:)
In distant Am:
  A less: in brev: could teach:
But we in Eng:
Are apt to leng:
  And not to curt: our speech.
Tho' words like Bucks:
  Or even Ess:
Are not a lux:
  But a necess:

In Frisco, Cal:
They never all:
  A proper name to fin:
The same in Pa:
Or Mass: or Va:
  In Mo: or Me: or Minn:
I guess they 'd arch
  Their eyebrows some,
Pronouncing Marjori:
  What 's spelt as Cholmonde :

So simp: a rule
May seem pecul:
  And make the crit: indig:
What matter if
The scans: is diff:
  The meaning too ambig: ?
The net result,
  Lacon: and punct:
Is worth a mult:
  Of needless unct:

We long for sile:
From folks who pile
  Their wordy Pel: on Oss:
Extremely nox:
And quite intox:
  By their exub: verbos:

ABBREVIATION'S ARTFUL AID

We curse their imp:
  In manner dras:
And fail to symp:
  With their loquac:

In House of Com:
They all abom:
  The periphrastic Pol:
Reviewers sniff
At auth: prolif:
  With semi-annual vol:
But we can pard:
  I do believe,
The minor bard
  Who will abbrev:

With pen and ink
In close propinq:
  The Poet, lucky fell:!
Avoiding troub:
May give his pub:
  The cred: for some intell:
And like an orph:
  In pose recumb:
In arms of Morph:
  Securely slumb:

Let corks explode
With brand: and sod:
  Ye wearers of the mot: !
Decant the cham:
(What matt: the dam: ?)
  And empt: the flowing bott: !
And ne'er surren:
  The Laureate's palm,
His haunch of ven:
  And butt of Malm: !

IV

THE CRY OF THE ELDERS

['With steady but increasing pace the world is approaching a point at which the cleverness of the young will amount to a social problem. Already things are getting uncomfortable for persons of age and sobriety, whose notion of happiness is to ruminate a few solid and simple ideas in freedom from disturbance.'—*Macmillan's Magazine.*]

O MY Children, do you hear your elders sighing?
Do you wonder that senility should find
Your encyclopædic knowledge somewhat trying
To the ordinary mind?
In the heyday of a former generation,
Some respect for our intelligence was shown;
And it's hard for us to cotton
To the fact that *you've* forgotten
More than *we* have ever known!

O my Children, do you hear your elders snoring,
When the 'chassis' of your motors you discuss?
Do you wonder that your 'shop' is rather boring
To such simple souls as us?[1]

[1] 'As us' is not grammar.—*Publisher's Reader.*
'As we' is not verse.—*H. G.*

Do you marvel that your dreary conversation
Should evoke the yawns that 'lie too deep for tears,'
When you lecture to your betters
About 'tanks' and 'carburettors,'
About 'sparking-plugs' and 'gears'?

O my Children, in the season of your nonage
(Which delightful days no longer now exist!)
We could join with other fogeys of our own age
In a quiet game of whist.
Now, at bridge, our very experts are defeated
By some beardless but impertinent young 'sub,'
Who converts our silent table
To a perfect Tow'r of Babel,
At the Athenæum Club!

O my Children, do you hear your uncle groaning,
When disturbed in the perusal of his *Punch*
By a nephew who insists on telephoning
To propose himself to lunch?
Hark! your rich but gouty relative is cursing,
As (like Longfellow) he hastens to declare,
'Tell me not your mournful number,
For my soul is bent on slumber!'
('Is that 225, Mayfair?')

THE CRY OF THE ELDERS

O my little ones, your parents were contented
With an omnibus of two-horse pow'r alone,
In an epoch when the Underground was scented
With a fragrance all its own.
Now the trains have doors that pinch us as we enter,
And suspended to a strap we strive to stand;
Or we nimbly board an 'Arrow,'
And our backbone turns to marrow,
As we skid along the Strand!

O my Children, we no longer are respected!
'Tis a fact we older fellows must deplore,
Whose opinions and whose judgments are neglected,
As they never were before.
We may tender good advice to our descendants;
We may offer them our money, if we will;
Lo, the one shall be forsaken,
And the other shall be taken
(Like the women at the mill!).

O my Children, note the moral (like a kernel)
I have hidden in the centre of my song!
Do not contradict a relative maternal,
If she happens to be wrong!
Be indulgent to the author of your being;

Never show him the contempt that you must feel ;
Treat him tolerantly, rather,
Since a man who is *your* father
Can't be wholly imbecile !

O my Children, we, the older generation,
At whose feet you ought (in theory) to sit,
Are bewildered by your mental penetration,
We are dazzled by your wit !
But we hopefully anticipate a future,
When the airship shall replace the motor-'bus,
And *your* children, when they meet you,
Shall inevitably treat you
Just as you are treating us !

V

A SEASONABLE CHRISTMAS SONG

THE days grow dark, and, in the Park,
Belated passers-by remark
That Christmastide is drawing near.
Amorphous snow-fed banks of cloud
Prepare somewhere a silver shroud,
To drape the dying Year.
Mere men congratulate each other,
And purchase Christmas cards for Mother.

Upon the Pond entitled 'Round,'
Where neither bird nor bark is found,
The greedy ice creeps out each day;
With noiceless footfall, once again,
The snowflakes at my window-pane
Ruffle and purr and play;
The cab-horse, on unsteady feet,
Skates sadly down St. James's Street.

Dame Winter, like some old-time nurse,
Attends the drowsy Universe,
A sudden silence in her tread ;
She smooths, with soft, maternal hand,
The snow-spun sheets across the land,
And puts the Earth to bed ;
While seedlings sleep beneath the snow,
And birds have gone to Monaco.

Oh, who would be a Father now?
(Observe his corrugated brow!
What Spartan patience he displays!)
The schools are shut: once more, alack!
Six sturdy sons come bounding back
For Christmas holidays!
With each successive dawn their home
Becomes more like the Hippodrome!

Oh, who would be an Uncle? Who?
When nephews—ay, and nieces too—
About his portly person climb?
Embraced by sticky girls and boys,
Whose anxious looks suggest the joys
Of Christmas Pantomime,
Within his purse he slowly dips
For customary Christmas tips.

A SEASONABLE CHRISTMAS SONG

The Postman we are forced to 'treat';
The proud Policeman on his beat,
The Dustmen who infest our door,
Each in his own peculiar way
Delights to make his patrons pay
Gratuities galore,
Alleging as sufficient reason
The advent of the Christmas season.

'Tis Christmas! Christmas ev'rywhere!
Our cooks prepare that pond'rous fare
Which we encourage as a nation;
While tradesmen tender huge accounts,
Of purely fabulous amounts,
For our consideration.
We shoot our neighbour's fatted pheasants,
And buy each other useless presents.

Though as a rule the Bells of Yule
Leave us comparatively cool
(As does the season altogether),
We ought to scorn such trifling ills
As children, gout, mince-pies, or bills,
And disregard the weather;
Like lunatics who, so they say,
Bathe in the Serpentine each day.

We Londoners should all repair
To some provincial refuge, where
The fogs are not so green and thick ;
Our brief vacation we should spend
At sunny Goole, or cheap Southend,
Or Newcastle-on-Tick ;
Rejoicing ev'ry time we hear
That Christmas comes but once a year.

Let us, indeed, be optimists,
And shake our faces in the fists
Of fogeys who complain or grumble ;
Encouraging our girls and boys
To eat and fight and make a noise,
To shout and play and tumble.
For them, at least, we can provide
A bright and happy Christmastide.

VI

THE SORROWS OF A MILLIONAIRE

A PLEA FOR THE SIMPLER LIFE

(*After Miss Corelli*)

O PITY the lot of the Millionaire,
With his days of rush and riot;
With his gilded palace in Grosvenor Square,
Where he vainly longs for quiet.
Think of his life
Of storm and strife,
And his rich unwholesome diet!

O pity the Crœsus, day by day,
With the cares of a King or Kaiser;
If he gives the whole of his money away,
He is known as an 'advertiser';
Doing good by stealth
With his surplus wealth,
He is branded, at once, a miser!

'Tis better to live from mouth to hand,
In a suburb, small but sunny,
Than to dwell in a West End lotusland
That is flowing with milk and honey;
With guests who stare
At your parvenu air,
And domestics who think you 'funny'!

Consider what men like Carnegie said
(Though nobody knows what *they* meant!)
Of the joys of toiling for daily bread,
And renouncing superfluous raiment,
As you work away,
Ten hours a day,
On a slender starvation payment.

For ev'rything comes to those that wait!
And even the poor relation,
Who spends his time in a frenzied state
Of perpetual liquidation,
When funds are low
Has a *quid pro quo*
In the pleasures of expectation!

THE SORROWS OF A MILLIONAIRE

'Tis better to fare as a hermit spare,
On a 'system' of vermicelli,
Than as millionaire on a marble stair,
On oysters and grapes and jelly ;[1]
With a fate forlorn
That provokes the scorn
Of such persons as Miss Corelli !

For what is the sense of a sealskin coat,
When Nature provides the rabbit?
And where is the charm of the *table d'hôte*,
Since moderns combine to crab it?
And thanks to the wiles
Of the frugal Miles,
We 've acquired the Plasmon habit !

Then a pauper's life is the life for me,
With the hopes such a life produces
Of a future of limitless £ s. d.
To be turned to noble uses !
. . . . .
(Some Shares I hold
In the Buried Gold
Of the optimistic Dr-c-s ! ! !)

[1] Jelly is never eaten on the stairs nowadays. See *Manners for Men.—Publisher's Reader.*

Please exercise a little common sense. See Stubbs on 'Savoir Faire' and Barbauld on 'Poetic Imagery.'—*H. G.*

VII

THE RETURN OF THE CHAPERONE

['There are signs and tokens—and let us thereat rejoice—that the chaperone is being restored to favour. One cannot pretend that we have done well without her all this time. Girls have not improved in tone or in manners.'—*The Lady's Pictorial.*]

O, NO longer shall our daughters, like the breath of a tornado,
Dance the cakewalk in a manner that no etiquette condones ;
Once again is ev'ry ballroom wall embellished by a dado
Of old-fashioned and relentless chaperones,
Who observe so gay a dance
With condemnatory glance,
Just as tho' it were a *can-can* from the Moulin Rouge in France !

See, the modest modern maiden, who in hansoms drove but lately
With some impecunious bachelor or needy younger son,
In the family barouche is sitting quietly, sedately,
With the dignified demeanour of a nun !

THE RETURN OF THE CHAPERONE

When her chaperone is by
She is diffident and shy,
And restrains the tiny twinkle that illuminates her eye.

O, no longer in the lobby of some Portrait Exhibition
Do the young of either sex come rushing madly to their fate ;
When the man without a mansion meets the miss without a mission
At the Gallery that's known as Tate-à-Tate !
For the modern girl is staid,
And attended by a maid,
If she happens to go shopping in the Burlington Arcade.

At the covered rink at Prince's, where the maiden goes a-skating
With the nicest Swiss professor that her pocket can afford,
Sits a matronly duenna, with an optic penetrating,
Which she mercilessly fixes on her ward ;
And the trembling amateur,
Gazing guiltily at her,
Never smiles upon the alien in his imitation fur.

O, no longer in the Monster Wheel at Earl's Court do the youthful
Manage somehow to get stranded at some safe but giddy height;
Reappearing with excuses, well-constructed but untruthful,
When the doors are being bolted for the night.
Modern maidens sit or stand,
With an aunt on either hand,
Quite contented with the moanings of the Exhibition Band.

Once again in London ballrooms the domesticated daughter
Leans neglected in the doorway, feeling very much *de trop*,
While she watches the disinterested chaperone who brought her
Dancing wildly with each eligible *beau*!
And, tho' wishing she were dead,
She politely bows her head
When she can't persuade her mother that it's time to go to bed.

THE RETURN OF THE CHAPERONE

Far too long and far too soundly has the modern matron
slumbered,
While her daughter wandered loose, without a collar
or a chain ;
But the days of youthful liberty are fortunately numbered,
And our offspring are protected once again !
With a 'fast' and *risqué* tone,
And a latchkey of their own,
They have long required the service of the watchful
chaperone !

VIII

THE LORD MAYOR'S SHOW

WHAT sound is this that greets the ear?
Why does each ragamuffin cheer
In such a loud and frenzied fashion?
While booming drum and shrieking fife
Proclaim the pomp of Public Life,
Its pageantry and passion,
To (Voluntary) Sons of Mars
Escorting emblematic Cars?

'Mid such theatrical display,
The City's chosen chief to-day
Assumes his dignified position;
These tawdry caravans that pass,
These cavalcades with bands of brass,
Are hallowed by tradition;
Each 'super,' in his quaint disguise,
Is dear indeed to English eyes.

THE LORD MAYOR'S SHOW

The female in that chariot there,
With helm of brass and flaxen hair,
Must fill us with a deep emotion ;
A gilded toasting-fork she wields,
And one of Nathan's tinsel shields,
As Ruler of the Ocean,
And we remember, as she waves,
That Britons never shall be slaves !

And those dejected men who sit,
Arrayed in furs or cowboy's kit,
On that pretentious painted wagon,
They are of English oak the chips !
(Observe them raise to furtive lips
The surreptitious flagon !)
Veracious symbols, if you please,
Of Greater-Britain-o'er-the-Seas !

The 'supers' in their dingy rows,
The matrons who so deftly pose,
Who bow and simper so politely ;
The occupants of ev'ry car
At reasonable prices are
Supplied by Messrs. Whiteley.
Thus fitly do we celebrate
Our civic majesty and state.

To any sane or normal mind
Processions of this garish kind
Are neither laudable nor funny ;
And tho' they suit the groundlings' taste,
Involve each year a senseless waste
Of ill-expended money,
Which might more aptly be enjoyed
By members of the Unemployed.

But while this circus-like parade
Of Ancient Guild and Fire Brigade
Must strain our sense of humour badly,
We gain some crumbs of comfort when
We feel that we are Englishmen,
Who take our pleasures sadly.
For quite the saddest thing we know
Is this effete, primeval Show.

IX

THE PHILOSOPHER

AFTER ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

(*Respectfully Dedicated to the Right Hon. A. J. Balfour, M.P.*)

GIVE to me the life I love;
Of the rest what matter?
One stout club to swing above,
One white ball to batter!
Well-kept 'green' and level 'tee,'
'Caddy' quick and clever!
That 's the game for a man like me!
That 's the life for ever!

Let the ball fly swift or slow,
Gorse or bracken stay me;
Give to me the links I know,
And a friend to play me!
Fame I seek not, nor your vote,
(Ties of office bore me!)
All I ask, a scarlet coat,
And a 'green' before me!

OTHER VERSES

Other statesmen may approve
    Hunting, fishing, shooting ;
Give to me the links I love,
    Mitcham, Sandwich, Tooting !
In The Commons once I spoke,
    I, the Party's pivot ;
Now the commons feel my stroke,
    As I lift each divot !

Let me, foozling from 'the rough,'
    In some bunker loiter,
Rather than peruse the stuff
    Telegraphed by Reuter.
Yellow men may slave in mines,
    Friends desert or mutter ;
White as snow my 'Haskell' shines,
    True as steel my 'putter' !

Let whatever fate befall,
    I am waiting ready,
With my eye upon the ball,
    And my right foot steady !
Votes I seek not, nor a 'seat,'
    (These I can't away with !)
All I ask, a 'caddy' neat,
    And a friend to play with !

THE PHILOSOPHER

Manchester may pass me by,
Bitter foes deride me;
Many a loyal friend have I,
Proud to stand beside me.
Other statesmen strive and spar,
Wrangling, bick'ring, scoffing;
I am happier, freer far,
Goffing, goffing, goffing!

Give to me the life I love!
(Let the public chatter.)
One stout club to swing above,
One white ball to batter!
Well-kept 'green' and level 'tee,'
Worthy high endeavour;
That's the game for a man like me!
That's the life for ever!

X

AN EPITHALAMIUM

(*Longworth—Roosevelt. February* 17, 1906)

HAIL, Bride and Bridegroom of the West!
Your troth irrevocably plighted!
Your Act of Union doubly blest,
Your single States United,
With full approval and assent
Of populace and President!

Let spangled banners wave on high,
To greet the maiden as she passes!
See how the proud Proconsul's eye
Grows dim behind his glasses!
How fond the heart that beats beneath
Those pleated Presidential teeth!

The Bishop has received his cheque,
The final slipper has been thrown;
With rice down each respective neck,
The couple stand alone.
To them, at last, the fates provide
A privacy so long denied.

How glad the happy pair must be
That Hymen's bonds have set them free!

AN EPITHALAMIUM

Letters and wires, from near and far,
Lie thickly piled on ev'ry table ;
The peaceful message from the Czar,
The Kaiser's kindly cable ;
The well-expressed congratulations
From Heads of all the Sister Nations.

Rich gifts, as countless as the sand
That cloaks the desert of Sahara,
From fish-slice to piano (grand),
From toast-rack to tiara,
Still overwhelm the lucky maid
(With heavy duties to be paid !).

See, hand in hand the couple stand !
(The guests their homeward journey take,
Concealing their emotion—and
Some lumps of wedding-cake !)
How glad the happy pair must be
That Hymen's bonds have set them free !

Free of the curious Yellow Press,
Free of the public's prying gaze,
Of all the troubles that obsess
The path of *fiancés* !
Alone at last, and safely screened
From onslaughts of the kodak fiend !

The Bride who bore without demur
The wiles of artists photographic,
Of vulgar crowds that gaped at her,
Congesting all the traffic,
Can shop once more, in perfect peace,
Without the help of the police.

No longer need the Bridegroom fear
The pressman probing his affairs,
Describing what he makes *per* year,
The very clothes he wears,
His hat, his boots, their shape and size,
And where he bought his marriage-ties!

Arrayed in stylish trav'lling dress,
Behold, the blushing bride departs,
The free Republican Princess,
A captive Queen of Hearts!
(Captive to Cupid, need I say?
But Queen in ev'ry other way!)

And this must surely be the hour
For Anglo-Saxons, ev'rywhere,
With cousinly regard, to show'r
Good wishes on the pair;
Borne on the bosom of the breeze,
Our blessings speed across the seas!

AN EPITHALAMIUM

Hail, Bride and Bridegroom of the West!
(Pray pardon my redundant lyre.)
May your united lives be blest
With all your hearts' desire!
Accept the warm felicitations
Of fond, if distant, blood-relations!

XI

IN MEMORIAM

[After considering the question for five years, the authorities have at last decided to refuse a site in London for the proposed Imperial Peace Memorial, to commemorate the names of the 25,000 British soldiers who fell in the cause of Empire during the South African War.]

You was all on you Patriots, h'every one,
When the Bo-er War were ended.
You was proud o' the work as your soldiers done,
Five year ago, when the fight were won,
An' you said as the 'men was splendid.'
Them as come 'ome from it lived in clover,
Arter the bloomin' war were over.

There wasn't enough as you folks could do
For the lads wot come from a distance;
Sons o' the Empire, loyal an' true,
As the Colonies sent, an' willing, too,
To the Motherland's assistance;
Greater-Britishers, blood-related,
'Ow they was honoured an' praised an' fêted!

IN MEMORIAM

You was all on you bloomin' Patriots then ;
We was 'Eroes, too, we others,
Wot 'ad got back safe to our 'omes agen,
Nor we didn't forget them gallant men,—
Comrades an' sons an' brothers,—
Them lads as we 'd left on the veldt be'ind us,
As their empty 'omes can still remind us.

That were five year since. An' you must allow
As your memory's short, an' rotten ;
For it seems as you 'asn't no time, some'ow,
To be Patriotic no longer now,
An' your 'Eroes is all forgotten !
An' there 's nothink as London town can show
For them lads as was killed five year ago.

Just think o' the money as London spent
When 'er troops to the front was bidden !
But she 'asn't got room for no monument ;
An' 'er buried dead they must rest content
Wi' the veldt where their bones lies 'idden.
An' there 's nothink further to say or do
For our sons as sleeps in the far Karoo.

An' Colonist cousins may search the town
For some sort of a national sign
That we honours our comrades as fought for the Crown,
With a courage, a faith, an' a 'igh renown
As deserved a Imperial shrine;
An' wot 'll they gather or understand
From the grateful ways o' the Motherland?

There 's no Memorial, little or great,
In our Capital stony-'earted;
No columns is raised to a noble fate,
No pillars is built to commemorate
The deeds o' the brave departed;
There 's nowheres as we can point wi' pride
To the names o' them Britons as fought and died
. . . . . .
In the Empire's cause they was glad to fight;
An' they 're dead, an' buried—an' out o' sight!

XII

'UNEMPLOYED'

I 'VE earned good wages this twelvemonth past,
But the trade o' Poplar 's slack to-day ;
Our yard shut down on Saturday last,
An' me an' the rest was turned away ;
Since when I 've 'unted an' searched around,
But work ain't nowheres to be found.

Three days I 've walked the bloomin' streets,
With never a bed, nor bite, nor sup ;
Two nights, from 'ard Embankment seats,
The copper 'e 's come an' woke me up ;
Tho' once, when the place was misty an' dark,
I managed a doss in Regent's Park.

I goes to the 'Army' barracks then ;
But a crowd of others 'd got a'ead ;
'Undreds o' white-faced, 'ungry men,
Watchin' the chance of a crust o' bread ;
An' the bloke wot stands at the shelter-gate,
'E sez as it 's full, an' we needn't wait.

Then I wanders round, till I comes at last
To the door o' the Burkly Restorong;
An' I sees the gents as they 'urries past,
A-takin' their lady-friends along;
An' I looks at the tables where they dined,
Till I wishes to Gawd they'd drawed the blind!

I crouches there in the crowded street,
In the cold o' that foggy November night,
A-watchin' the gentry drink an' eat,
As they sets so snug in the warmth an' light;
An' I wonders 'ow many o' *them* there be
As was givin' a thought to the likes o' me.

Does ever a one o' them rich folks there—
With 'is bottle o' wine an' 'is plate o' meat—
Does ever a one of 'em trouble or care
For us as is shiverin' out in the street,
Wot 'asn't no bottle, wot 'asn't no plate,
No meat in the cupboard, no coal in the grate?

I ain't o' the grumblin' sort myself,
But it 's 'ard to bear when they turns you orf,
When the missus she looks at 'er empty shelf,
An' you 'arks to 'er narsty 'ackin' korf;
It 's 'ard: but it 's wuss for some than me,
For I 'asn't no starvin' kids, thanks be!

'UNEMPLOYED'

There 's thousands arskin' for honest work,
Shelter an' food an' a chance to live ;
The question 's one as we mustn't shirk—
An' wot 's the answer that they 'll be give ?

. . . . . .

Meanwhile, tho' there 's none for the poor, it 's true,
There 's plenty o' work for the *rich* to do !

XIII

THE BALLAD OF THE OMNIBUS DRIVER

THROUGH street an' square
Dan drives 'is pair,
    Some fifteen hour a day, an' more ;
Till 'is 'ip-joints ache
Wi' the grip o' the brake,
        An' 'is arms is stiff an' sore.
For fifteen hour, the same ole tack,
'E drives 'em out, an' 'e drives 'em back.

Five bob a day
Is the most o' pay
    As 'e 's glad, as a general rule, to get.
If 'is time is slow,
Or 'is takin's low,
        Some o' that 'll be docked, you bet !
'E 's fined quick enough if 'e drives too fast ;
An' 'e 's fined agen if 'e comes 'ome last !

THE BALLAD OF THE OMNIBUS DRIVER

Oh, 'is cheeks is red,
An' 'e looks well-fed,
An' 'e never don't grouse, whate'er befall;
With a rovin' heye
When the gals is by,
An' a friendly word for all.
If 'e 'adn't a-been so stout an' strong,
'E wouldn't 'a' stood the work so long.

For there 'e 'll set
In the cold an' wet,
Cramped up on the edge of 'is 'ard box-seat;
With a minit or two,
The 'ole day through,
For a drop, or a bite to eat.
They changes the 'osses now an' agen,
But, bless yer, they never don't change the men!

When the frozen street
Is a slipp'ry sheet,
An' the copper 'e 'olds up a warnin' 'and,
On a greasy slope,
With the road like soap,
Where a cat couldn't 'ardly stand,
It 's enough for to make a hangel cuss
To be drivin' a two-ton omnibus.

When the fog 's as thick
As a wall o' brick,
An' the 'osses theirselves 'as lost their way ;
When the 'busses wedge
At the pavement's edge,
On a nice November's day ;
When it ain't no weather for dorg nor man,
'E 's a-earnin' 'is fippence a hour, is Dan !

Nor it ain't so nice
When 'is feet 's like ice,
An' the reins is slimy, an' 'ard to 'old ;
When 'is 'ands is blue,
An' 'is gloves wet through,
An' 'e 's sick wi' the damp an' cold.
When it 's fifteen hour o' *that* each day,
It ain't all skittles an' beer, I lay !

'E 's a married man
With a fam'ly, Dan
(Fine nippers they are, an' no mistake) ;
But it 's once in a week
As they 'ears 'im speak,
Or 'e sees 'is kids awake.
For 'e doesn't get 'ome till late at night,
An' 'e 's orf in the mornin' afore it 's light.

THE BALLAD OF THE OMNIBUS DRIVER

Ho, you pities the men
In the 'sweater's' den,
    Where the Army trouses is stitched an' lined;
But you 'll never fuss
About Dan on 'is 'bus,
        Or 'is mate on the step be'ind.
They may sweat or freeze as they bloomin' please—
You 'asn't no time for the likes o' these!

. . . . . .

When you wants to stop
At the nex'-door shop
    (As ladies an' suchlike always will);
When you runs up late,
An' you makes 'em wait
        On the steepest part o' the 'ill;
Nex' time as you goes for your daily ride,
Just give a thought for the men outside!

AUTHOR'S AFTWORD

How I have laboured, night and day
(Just like the hero of a novel),
To drive the hungry wolf away
From my baronial hovel,
To keep the bailiffs from my home,
By finishing this bulky tome!

To such a trying mental strain
My intellect is far from fitted,
Though if I had an ounce more brain
I should be quite half-witted,
And when I wander in my mind
I am most difficult to find.

The sort of life for which I care
Is one combining Peace and Plenty,
With *laisser aller*, *laisser faire*,
And *dolce far niente*;[1]
But this I can't enjoy (I know it)
And still remain a Minor Poet.

[1] The heart of ev'ry Bridge-fiend jumps:
Dolce . . . 'tis sweet to make 'No Trumps!'

AUTHOR'S AFTWORD

So all day long I sit and toil,
Consuming ink and time and curses,
And pints of precious midnight oil,
To perpetrate these verses.
If *writing* them be dull indeed,
Alas! what must they be to *read!*

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Graham, Harry
Misrepresentative women

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